



Media
Council

The Paley Center for Media
Media Council Dialogue Summary
by R.J. Smith

Media Council
Media and the
Muslim World:
Enriching the
American Dialogue

Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue

Carnegie
CORPORATION
OF NEW YORK

Sponsored by **Carnegie Corporation of New York**
In Partnership with **The Paley Center for Media**

THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

September 29-30, 2009
New York City

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Keynote Conversation with Christiane Amanpour.....	4
Dialogue Participants.....	10
Media and the Muslim World Dialogue Session.....	11
Resources and Tools.....	26
Dialogue Participant Biographies.....	30
Acknowledgments.....	40

About the Author:

RJ Smith is a Los Angeles-based journalist and media critic. He is the author of *The Great Black Way: LA in the 1940s and the Lost African-American Renaissance*.

MEDIA AND THE MUSLIM WORLD: ENRICHING THE AMERICAN DIALOGUE

On September 29 and 30, 2009, The Paley Center for Media hosted a Media Council Dialogue, titled *Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue*, at our New York City headquarters.

Held in partnership with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, this Dialogue explored how to improve the depth and quality of the US news media's coverage of Muslim cultures, both here and abroad. The goal was to illuminate new approaches and resources that can help journalists and news executives overcome challenges to providing comprehensive and accurate information on Islam and Muslims to the American public—information that is vital for meaningful and productive public discourse on major foreign and domestic policy issues.

This program is part of the Carnegie Corporation's \$10 million investment to enrich the quality of America's public dialogue on Islam and Muslim societies. In announcing this initiative, Carnegie Corporation President Vartan Gregorian said, "We hope that our work will better equip Americans to make informed decisions about, and engage with, various Muslim communities in our midst as well as those abroad."

The Paley Center for Media was a particularly appropriate venue for this important discussion. With a commitment to advance the understanding of media—its social impact, artistic value, and historical importance—for the public and industry professionals, the Paley Center is uniquely poised to assemble those in a position to make a difference.

The program began with a keynote conversation with CNN's Christiane Amanpour on the evening of September 29, before an invited audience of approximately 160 guests. The following morning, senior members of the news industry and experts on the Muslim world, selected for their variety of perspectives, convened for discussion. Garrick Utley, president of The Neil D. Levin Graduate Institute of International Relations and Commerce, served as moderator. The following is a summary of *Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue*.

Introduction

Headlines continue to underscore the critical role played on both the international and domestic stage by Muslim countries and cultures. Reports warn us of Iran's nuclear ambitions, the world debates escalation of the conflict in Afghanistan, while a Nigerian student, a Colorado airport driver, and five young men from Virginia all face charges of trying to bring jihad to America.

But it's not just stories of strife and confrontation that merit our attention. Just blocks from The Paley Center for Media, at the United Nations, President Obama recently renewed his call to begin a new chapter in international cooperation, one that recognizes the rights and responsibilities of all nations. It echoed his speech in Cairo, when he proposed a new era in relations among the United States and countries of the Muslim world, emphasizing similarities rather than differences. "America and Islam are not exclusive," he said, "and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles of justice and progress, tolerance and the dignity of all human beings." He also vowed "to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear."

Important issues all. But who exactly was the President talking to, and what are we talking about, when we turn our attention to the Muslim world? After all, Islam is not a monolith. Its adherents are present in every country. It is a religion of tremendous diversity, encircling the globe, from the country with the world's largest Muslim population—and a home to President Obama during his childhood—Indonesia, to the US, where millions of our friends and neighbors are Muslims.

That question of who we are talking about comes into even greater relief when we consider some statistics. According to the Pew Research Center, fifty-eight percent of Americans say they know little or nothing about Islam's practices, and thirty-five percent say they have a negative opinion of Muslims—opinions that respondents say are largely shaped by the news media. Does the media's tendency to focus on adversity and conflict contribute to these attitudes? What can the news media do to provide a fuller, more informed, and more normalized view of Muslim issues? These questions formed the backdrop for the Paley Center's Media Council event, *Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue*.

There have been a number of first-rate conferences that have addressed similar questions, many of them funded by our partners at the Carnegie Corporation. Our aim was to build on those earlier dialogues and reports through a frank discussion of the issues, and to bring new tools and resources to many of the decision makers in American newsrooms. Many of those tools are online resources and have been vetted and used by our working journalists. Some were business resources and strategies, used to address the issue of the shrinking dollars in the American news budgets. And perhaps most importantly, some were human resources, people who are available to serve as experts and facilitators for journalists seeking insight about the Muslim world.

Also from Cairo, President Obama spoke these words to the adherents of Islam. "There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground." We hope that the lessons learned from our discussion will honor that spirit of understanding and serve all who seek greater comprehension and wisdom.

Peter Herdrich
Director, Industry Programs
The Paley Center for Media

January 2010

Keynote Conversation with Christiane Amanpour

Reported by RJ Smith

September 29, 2009

What does a Muslim look like? Where do the some 2.35 million Muslims in the United States live? What are their stories? Americans seem, by some measure, markedly unfamiliar with the essentials of Islam, and unaware of their Islamic neighbors.

A report released by The Pew Research Center shows that over the last seven years there has been a rise in the number of Americans who believe that Islam encourages violence. Thirty-eight percent in 2009 compared to twenty-five percent in March 2002, only six months after September 11. In one sense, that data seems unsurprising, given the fear the attacks inspired and the stress caused by the two bloody wars that followed. But by another measure, they are startling. Because for all the thousands of hours of TV reporting and the miles of print journalism covering the growth of Islam and its various currents here and all over the world, the fact is that Americans have formed many misperceptions of the religion since September 11, 2001. Quantity of information, it appears, is not enough. Quality and depth are at a premium.

In June 2009, President Barack Obama gave a speech at Cairo University, in Egypt. The speech marked a change of direction in American foreign policy in the Middle East. “I have come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world; one based on mutual interest and mutual respect; and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition.” Rarely does a public official so demonstrably describe a new beginning. Rarely, perhaps, does so much work need to be done to find the starting point.

A global dialogue is needed. In the months leading up to The Paley Center for Media’s *Media and the Muslim World* Dialogue, that need was only underscored in news from assorted world centers. In France, President Nicolas Sarkozy stood at the Palace of Versailles to declare the burka “not welcome” in France. In the Chinese city of Urumqi, tensions between Han Chinese and Islamic Uighurs caused tens of thousands to protest in the streets.

This is a moment when even the selection of the Nobel Peace Prize winner seems to underscore a desire not just in America, but around the world, for improved understanding between Islam and the West. On September 29 and 30, 2009, the Carnegie Corporation of New York and The Paley Center for Media held a Dialogue titled *Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue*. For two days, journalists, academics, pollsters, consultants, and activists met and spoke with one another to discuss the challenges news outlets face when covering the Muslim world and what can be done to solve them. To set the stage for this important discussion, participants and guests gathered on September 29, 2009 to hear veteran broadcaster Christiane Amanpour, the chief international correspondent at CNN and host of the show *Amanpour*, talk with Pat Mitchell, President and CEO of the Paley Center, about her views on the subject.

Christiane Amanpour: One Journalist’s Perspective

Pat Mitchell, President of the Paley Center, launched the proceedings by warmly welcoming participants and guests, and greeting Paley Center Chairman Frank A. Bennack, Jr. and Hillary Wiesner, Program Director for the Carnegie Corporation of New York’s Islam Initiative. She explained that the goal of this event was to “increase our dialogue with the Muslim world.”

There could be few better equipped to map the territory for this two-day discussion than the CNN anchor Christiane Amanpour. She was born in Iran, spent much of her youth in London, and went to college in the United States. In 1983 she began as a desk assistant in the New York bureau of CNN; her first major assignment was the Gulf War. Since then, as Mitchell put it, her work “has quite literally defined what it means to be an international correspondent.” On occasion the US government has tracked her whereabouts as a way of keeping tabs on global hotspots.

Mitchell described a recent experience; while on business in Moscow, she turned on the television and watched the inaugural broadcast of the new CNN news show, *Amanpour*. That show featured a lengthy and heated interview with Zimbabwe’s president Robert Mugabe. It was, as Mitchell described, an example of how quality journalism can shed light on a crisis that seems remote when it plays out halfway across the world.

Lauding Amanpour, Mitchell asked a necessary question—was America watching? *Amanpour* airs weekdays on CNN International, but only once a week on CNN US. “We hear how Americans don’t care, that there’s no audience here for problems of another country,” said Mitchell. “How do you confront that?”

“First of all I don’t believe it,” answered the reporter. “So I confront it by not giving in to that...I think it’s a wrong premise.” The challenge for members of the media is to make reports lively and compelling while remaining true to the subject matter. “There’s no trick to it. It’s about good storytelling, about being willing to break the stereotypes, break the clichés,” Amanpour said. “To be willing to take a story even if it doesn’t fit your preconceived ideas, and to report it.”

A key to understanding, she suggested, was a substance ever more valuable in an era of reduced resources: time. It takes time to get to know your story, to meet your subjects on their turf. Amanpour noted that she doesn’t often even know what the landscape looks like when she arrives in a region. What you bring is not as important as what you take away. “There are layers to reporting,” she explained. “You learn on the job. The longer you stay, the more you learn...when you first land somewhere you do a fairly sort of superficial level of reporting. You go talk to people, you get all their sound bites, put them in. Then you go deeper: you go to their homes or their schools, or their places of worship, into their business places or their family situations.”

One thing American journalists have a responsibility to do is to make images from across the world more accessible to those at home. Another is to help people interpret the images they have before them. One symbol widely in the news lately, and wildly open to assorted interpretations, is the veil.

This year, in his Egyptian address, President Obama defended the right of women to wear the garment in America. Meanwhile, across Europe the veil has become a symbol for competing ideas of what Islam stands for.

“When you look at, let’s say, a Muslim woman, everybody has these preconceived notions that [the veil] is about oppression, it’s about victimization, it’s about second class citizenship,” said

Amanpour. “To an extent, a lot of that is true. But there is also a fuller, more complete, other side to it.”

Having recently interviewed Jordan’s Queen Rania, Amanpour talked with admiration about Rania’s embrace of social media. Rania has her own YouTube page, and uses Twitter and Facebook to express her activism. In one of her YouTube clips, Rania gives Oprah Winfrey her opinion of the veil: “We think it’s a personal choice. Unfortunately, in the West, people look at the veil as a sign of oppression or weakness. This is not true as long as a woman is wearing it because of her belief. I always say we should judge women according to what’s going on in their heads rather than what’s going on top of their heads.”

In the Middle East, Rania has become a symbol for young, internationalist ideas. (On her Twitter page, she is following The Onion, Jimmy Fallon, and the World Economic Forum.) Amanpour made much note of this, and then talked more generally about the Islamic youth quake, and how its shockwaves are only beginning to be felt.

A clip of Amanpour’s documentary *Generation Islam*—which premiered earlier this year at the Paley Center—was shown. In the documentary, Amanpour travels to Pakistan, Gaza, and Afghanistan, interviewing representative young people.

She visits Mercy Corps, an international relief agency with an important presence in Gaza. At their Gaza headquarters, Amanpour showed how future leaders are being nurtured, connecting to others from around the world through guidance and Internet hookups. A Gaza youth is interviewed on camera; he wears, tellingly, a New York Yankees cap. “We just want to have a simple life. A simple and peaceful life. And we are not having it.”

It is youths themselves, and the social media that they are making the most of, that are offering a fresh hope for a dialogue between the West and the Muslim world. In the days after the Iranian election, when a news crackdown limited Western coverage of the protest in the streets, it was through Twitter, Facebook, and images captured by cell phones that we learned how diverse a seemingly monolithic Islamic nation could be. Speaking of those who bravely stepped into the streets and shared words and images with the world, Amanpour called for “new media and new thinking.” She declared, “these are highly sophisticated, very well-educated people, these young people. It’s a huge and valuable pool to nurture.”

But these young people are at best quasi-journalists, if they have any journalistic training at all. If Amanpour was celebrating the potential of this generational energy wedded to populist technology, she also voiced a huge caveat.

She saw, in her words, a “huge dilemma” in relying on untrained amateurs and citizen journalists to report the news. We need them, now more than ever perhaps, but we must not rely on them alone. “To me they are vital, but they are like the eyewitnesses of yesteryear...we have to be able to know for sure what’s going on by having our sources, by being able to corroborate what’s going on.

“The delivery systems are being so brilliantly perfected, but who’s minding the content? That’s something very important, because it’s about the content.”

Mitchell asked, “What can we believe?” She inquired what the status of journalistic standards might be in a world where working journalists are underfunded and at risk.

Amanpour insisted on the necessity of perpetuating journalistic standards in places where they have not taken root. “Do old fashioned journalism—double-checking, triple-checking your sources, corroborating facts and basically being journalists. That’s why this is a profession, it’s not a hobby. It comes with its rules and regulations.”

What can we believe? It’s a dilemma that remains unresolved. Amanpour deftly laid out both sides of the issue, celebrating the democratizing force of youth and technology, while honoring the top-down nature of industry standards and media networks. Then it was time for questions.

Question Session

A question followed. It began with praise for *60 Minutes* (where Amanpour is a contributor), but then noted with a measure of concern that, according to one figure, the average viewer age is sixty-years-old.

“And what’s wrong with that?” Amanpour asked with amusement, as the room laughed.

But to the questioner’s general point about what the industry is doing to bring young viewers in, Amanpour suggested that while an effort must be made, there’s a danger in being too driven by demographics.

Mitchell suggested it was a mistake to simply discredit the ratings. The best approach, she said, is to find new ways to tell stories, and new ways to get the word out. This was a natural time to introduce a friend of the Paley Center, someone from the audience with experience telling stories people want to hear. Muna AbuSulayman is host of a popular Saudi Arabian TV show, which Mitchell described as being similar to *The View*, and she is also a well-known public figure in the Middle East.

What is needed, AbuSulayman said, is “a leap in knowledge.” While Middle Eastern youth have greater access to technology and media than ever, without the journalistic standards that Amanpour spoke of, “we don’t have real information. We don’t have CNN being translated into Arabic.”

There was some talk that though shows like *The View* are seen as crowding out news coverage, the possibility exists for precisely this kind of programming to present important topics in inviting, unusual ways. This is especially true, perhaps, in countries where press traditions are in a nascent stage. This is one reason, it was declared, that AbuSulayman’s show, *Kalam Nawaem* – has been so successful. While Mitchell suggested AbuSulayman had something in common with *The View*’s Joy Behar, it was also clear that the Saudi Arabian talk show has given her a public profile that has made her an effective communicator of ideas and spokeswoman for dialogue.

Amanpour advanced this view. “In some Middle Eastern and Arab countries there is a broader sort of ‘social television’ going on, programs where you can discuss women’s issues, or social issues, family issues. But when it comes to hard news about your own country and the hard politics, you can’t do it, because they are not free countries. So it is a Sisyphean task of pushing

this boulder of information up the hill.” The thought led Mitchell to muse that things would be better off if AbuSulayman’s show was broadcast on CNN and Amanpour was available in Arabic.

The quip pushed the thought forward. Amanpour discussed the saga of Tolo TV, an unlikely hotspot of ‘social television.’ This Kabul-based network was founded by Saad Mohseni, an Australian citizen who returned from exile to his birthplace, Afghanistan, and in 2004 created the first commercial television network in the country.

Tolo TV features a homegrown clone of a Western program. *Afghan Star* is, by some measure, nothing more than an *American Idol* knockoff. But the show reveals how one culture can shape another—sometime with important differences. In the US, *Idol* contestants risk their self-respect; in Afghanistan, *Afghan Star* contestants risk their lives. When a finalist let her headscarf slip while performing, she was threatened and forced into hiding. In a country where the Taliban outlawed music and dancing, singing can be all but revolutionary.

Amanpour called the show “a major statement,” which is itself a major statement from a reporter who worries that entertainment is crowding out news programming in the West. Though the show was a huge hit, Afghan conservatives decried it and called for its removal. Instead, Amanpour said, Mohseni added a new program, a sort of religious contest that featured Koranic readings and women in scarves. “We called it *Koran Star*,” she said.

It worked. “This appeased the conservatives and it also was highly viewed in Afghanistan,” said Amanpour. “This to me seems very good, because you are not trying to take another culture and turn it into a reflection of what you are—western, democratic, liberal. You’re trying to respect [conservative] culture and have freedom and choices as well. It was a brilliant compromise...” The show, she noted, was hardly Mohseni’s only bold move. In July, he broadcast a Western-style debate between Afghanistan’s presidential candidates (Hamid Karzai boycotted the event.)

The next question came from James Rubin, former journalist and diplomat, current adjunct professor at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, and advisor to the president and secretary of state. Not to mention husband of Christiane Amanpour.

Rubin had a statement and a question for the room. He began by harking back, to “when I was briefly in the government (he served under President Clinton as assistant secretary of state for public affairs and chief spokesman for the State Department from 1997 to May 2000.)

“Talking to the media in foreign countries, I would often get hooked up to a satellite. Let’s say the country was Egypt; they would brief me that there were nine journalists in a room in Cairo. And then they would proceed to tell me about the nine journalists: That four of them were from the government-controlled station; that one was from the anti-imperialist daily...and they’d say, ‘if you do a really good job, you might convince one of the nine.’”

His point was that in a region where media gatekeepers already have their minds made up, having the facts on your side doesn’t necessarily count for much. What are needed are homegrown traditions of unbiased, in-depth reporting. “If anybody asks what’s the best amount of money we could spend to improve understanding between America and the Islamic world, it is

to help them hire real journalists,” said Rubin. “They don’t have facts. When it gets to the big conflict issues, [like] Iraq, Afghanistan, then you have emotional words surrounding the facts, and you have a set of problems that are larger than that.”

His question, which followed this statement, suggested an ambitious plan for remedying the situation. He asked if the Paley Center had ever considered working in tandem with network executives to establish an exchange program as has been done with European journalists over the years.

Mitchell responded enthusiastically, noting how extant training and mentoring programs had been making a difference. And she noted that with the Paley Center’s chairman, representatives from Hearst and other media entities in attendance, the suggestion was heard.

AbuSulayman stood again and made sure the room knew of her efforts in this very direction, and made a pitch for funding. This too, fell on friendly ears.

The attendees then retired from the Concourse Theater, and a reception was held in the Steven Spielberg Gallery.

September 30, 2009

Dialogue Participants

Moderator:

Garrick Utley, President, Levin Graduate Institute of International Relations and Commerce of The State University of New York

Participants:

Geneive Abdo
Foreign Policy Analyst
The Century Foundation

Deborah Amos
Correspondent
National Public Radio

David Clark
Senior Producer
Fox News

John Daniszewski
Senior Managing Editor
Associated Press

Walid El-Gabry
President
Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists
Association

Kate Felsen
Senior Producer
ABC News

Brooke Gladstone
Host
NPR's *On the Media*

Nisid Hajari
Foreign Editor
Newsweek

Andrew Heyward
Senior Advisor
Marketspace LLC/ Monitor Group

Janice Kaplan
Editor
Parade

Daisy Khan
Executive Director
American Society for Muslim Advancement

Edina Lekovic
Communications Director
Muslim Public Affairs Council

Marc Lynch
Blogger, Foreign Policy.com and Director,
Institute for Middle East Studies, George
Washington University

Irshad Manji
Director, Moral Courage Project
Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, NYU

Pat Mitchell
President and CEO
The Paley Center for Media

Dalia Mogahed
Senior Analyst and Executive Director
Gallup Center for Muslim Studies

Lawrence Pintak
Founding Dean, Edward R. Murrow College
of Communication
Washington State University

Howard Rosenberg
Producer
60 Minutes

Charles Sennott
Executive Editor
Global Post

Jamie Tarabay
Correspondent
National Public Radio

Steven Waldman
Editor in Chief
Beliefnet.com

Observers:

Christy Carpenter, The Paley Center for Media
Paul Casey, Washington State University

Marti Casey, Washington State University
Sheila Davaney, Ford Foundation

Gustave M. Hauser, Hauser
Communications

Peter Herdrich, The Paley Center for Media
Carol Kowalski, Washington State
University

Hoda Osman, Arab and Middle Eastern
Journalists Association

J. Max Robins, The Paley Center for Media
Nadia Roumani, Doris Duke Foundation for
Islamic Art

RJ Smith, Rapporteur

Toby Volkman, Henry Luce Foundation
Hillary Wiesner, Carnegie Corporation of
New York

Media and the Muslim World Dialogue

Reported by RJ Smith

After welcoming everyone to the morning's Media Council Dialogue, Pat Mitchell noted that there was a "whole ecosystem of views" represented in the Kissinger Global Conference Room for the discussion. The focus of this Dialogue, she declared, was not on the media that America exports throughout the world, so much as it is about the news Americans consume at home. At the heart of today's dialogue was this question: How can media consumers be better informed about Islam in all its forms?

For a country amply proud of its diversity, we often find ourselves baffled by the diversity of the world outside our borders. There are Russian Tatars, Berber Shi'ites, Sufis, Uighurs, and more, in the Muslim world. It can be a bewildering job for the media to parse distinctions, penetrate language barriers, and understand what is happening. We continue to scramble the essential distinction between Shi'a and Sunni, and know even less about other distinctions. Yet Islamic culture has found a solid place as part of the American fabric, so much so that the news-gathering trip to Dearborn has become as clichéd as the trip to the barbershop to sample the African American community. Home and abroad the Muslim world represents rich and underexplored territory for journalists. How to understand this world, how to find the resources to get the word out, how to rewire consumers to understand the news: these are imperative questions for the media today.

To help us understand the gulf between the media and the Muslim world, Mitchell then introduced the moderator, Garrick Utley. He is the president of the Neil D. Levin Graduate Institute of International Relations and Commerce of the State University of New York. A veteran broadcaster who has covered international news for NBC, ABC, CBS, and PBS, Utley helped anchor CNN's coverage of September 11. Today he has programs on American Public Radio and PBS.

Utley offered a roadmap for the proceedings, and inserted a note of caution. In talking about the media and the Muslim world today, it is easy, he said, to concentrate exclusively on technology and changes in the news industry (such as the closing of foreign bureaus due to shrinking budgets) and to see the problem as something that can be solved by financial and technological engineering. Yet, he suggested, the difficulties addressed today are in fact nothing new. "In an important way, we are talking about history and culture—deeply rooted history that goes back centuries." Ultimately, what is needed isn't a new algorithm or access to broadband. What is needed, said Utley, is a major change in attitudes that have come to seem instinctive.

In going around the room and making introductions, panelists wasted no time in advancing the discussion. Daisy Khan described how, in the years since September 11, people reflexively ask her the same three questions: Why is Islam so violent? Where are your leaders and why don't they speak out? Why are Muslim women treated as second class citizens?

To Khan, nesting within these questions is a great deal of misinformation and misunderstanding that provide powerful motivation for her work as director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement. These questions arise from curiosity, but increasingly come to feel like provocation, she said.

Khan noted that there were five Muslims seated around the table, and all five were women. “We are not silent, we are not sitting behind the burka, we are working,” she declared.

Introducing himself, Walid El-Gabry offered to introduce panelists and other journalists to the numerous members of the Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association, of which he is president. The AMEJA has members in places like Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Pakistan; it includes staffers for the *New York Times* and Associated Press, as well as political bloggers in countries where censorship is a problem. For all the nuanced talk to come about many issues, this was the heart of what this Dialogue was about: providing resources to journalists, bridging the gap between the American media and the Muslim world. Regarding issues of the Arab and Muslim world, El-Gabry said, “if you need it on the ground, we have those people.”

After introductions of panelists, Utley narrated a display of data on Muslims in America, culled from reports from the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies and the Pew Research Center. The data is summarized below:

Muslim Americans:

Who Are They?

Is religion important to your daily life?

Yes:

- Muslims 80%
- Protestants 76%
- Catholics 68%
- Mormons 85%
- Jews 39%
- US General Population 65%

Muslim Americans:

Who Are They?

How many see themselves as ‘thriving’?

- Muslims 41%
- Protestants 48%
- Catholics 45%
- Mormons 51%
- Jews 56%
- US General Population 46%

The Muslim American Experience

Have you ever been a victim of discrimination as a Muslim in the US?

- 25% Yes
- 73% No
- 2% Don’t know

The Muslim American Experience

Being a Muslim in the US since 9/11 has been:

- More difficult 53%
- Hasn’t changed 40%
- Other/Don’t know 7%

The Muslim American Experience

Most important problems facing American Muslims:

- Discrimination/racism/prejudice: 19%
- No problems: 19%
- Being viewed as a terrorist: 15%
- Ignorance about Islam: 14%
- Stereotyping: 12%
- Negative Media portrayals: 7%

The American Perspective

One-word impressions of Islam

- Twice as many people in the general US population use negative words as positive words to describe their impressions of the Muslim religion (30% vs. 15%)

The American Perspective

What influences views of Muslims?

- 32% Media
- 18% Personal Experience
- 18% Education
- 11% Religious beliefs
- 6% Views of friends/ family

The American Perspective

Does Islam encourage violence?

- 36% said Yes in 2005
- 45% said Yes in 2007
- 38% said Yes in 2009

Utley noted that in a week when a Denver shuttle driver with an Islamic background was charged in connection with an FBI terror investigation, news coverage and American perceptions of Islam surely overlapped. He proposed looking first at international coverage.

What's working and what isn't in the current coverage of the Muslim world?

Utley called upon Andrew Heyward, former head of CBS News and advisor for Marketspace LLC, to open the discussion. Heyward proposed a realpolitik way of viewing the issue at hand. Commercial networks and publications, Heyward said, must maximize audience numbers not to thrive, but to simply survive today. And thus, he suggested, decisions regarding coverage are increasingly based on how solidly they can capture and hold a viewer's attention.

The economic downturn has left journalists grasping for resources to cover news. Where once there were staff reporters on the ground, living in the area they covered, increasingly there is an editor waiting for a crisis to appear, then calling a reporter to catch the next plane onto the scene. "It is often very hard for non-journalists to accept the fact that journalism focuses on exceptionalism, on things that are different, things that are not the rule," said Heyward. "And the underlying issues in society, including things like literacy, poverty, and health care... are woefully under-covered by journalists in general. And religion certainly is on that list too."

The statement was seconded, tested, and challenged by a variety of subsequent panelists. Janice Kaplan, editor of the weekly magazine *Parade*, said that good stories could be done about everyday topics. Her readership at *Parade*, which has the biggest circulation of any magazine in the country, is interested in human-interest topics and meditative treatments of subjects.

Exceptionalism, as the panel mulled it, started to sound like another word for conflict. Conflict and warfare have certainly been staples of the way Islam is apprehended in the United States, lamented some. Edina Lekovic regretted the fact that every time an Al Qaeda video is released, the western media broadcasts it ad infinitum. She called this a great recruiting tool, and pointed out that no group of Islamic moderates, no matter how sizeable, could hope for anything like that kind of publicity for its views.

“Absence of conflict doesn’t mean there’s no story there,” she said. “The conversation within Muslim circles is much richer than is being represented.” Mainstream Muslims have to prove their credentials to the media, because they haven’t blown anything up. Meanwhile, “The terrorist narrative is told over and over and over again.”

An unfamiliar version of this narrative, more nuanced and complicated, was featured prominently on the cover of *Newsweek* that week. It was described by the magazine’s foreign editor, Nisid Hajari, as a mix of both exceptionalist elements and a counterintuitive approach. The story was patient, lengthy, and told from the inside. It was an oral history of the Afghan war told through the voices of six Taliban members. It was an effort to provide one of the rarest things in war reporting, the voice and unvarnished perspective of the enemy.

Utley asked if the story would have been done months ago, before the magazine underwent a highly publicized rebranding. *Newsweek* intends to establish a niche readership rather than count on a mass audience.

Hajari suggested that *Newsweek* would not have ruled out such a story before, but that it was very much a product of the new thinking. The story represents what the magazine seeks to do: “It’s longer form journalism, coming at a familiar subject in an original and inventive way,” he explained. Editors must be more selective, but it also means they still need to attend to the exceptionalism Heyward mentioned.

Hajari talked about the difficulty of, first of all, shaping coverage of an issue like the war in Afghanistan for an audience that wants something comprehensive and considered, and then making the content unique. To Heyward, the era of diminished profits means going after the greatest number of viewers more doggedly, smartly. Hajari saw the challenge instead as understanding where your strengths lie and understanding that—for some important topics—there isn’t going to be a mass audience, so the challenge is to find a way to make the niche work.

Challenges to comprehensive coverage of the Muslim world

Utley began this portion of the dialogue by noting that the absence of coverage created unintended hardships. He recalled a time when he worked at ABC and a reporter wanted to air an international story. However, an editor shot the reporter down after noting that they hadn’t done the story in several years, and thus would need the entire ninety-second window to explain the back-story.

Kate Felsen of ABC then talked about how networks try to maintain coverage while bureaus are closing and segments get split into smaller sections of air time. The overall philosophy hasn't changed, she said; there's still a commitment to foreign coverage. The devil is in the details though, she noted. A story she had ready to go yesterday was tabled after a tsunami hit Samoa.

For the AP's John Daniszewski, the issue isn't holding on to a mass audience; as the international news editor for the wire service, his stories are in high demand by outlets with smaller newsrooms of their own. AP may be an independent news organization, he noted, but that hasn't stopped some governments from seeing it as a representative of American policy. It also hasn't stopped its correspondents on the ground from being harassed by local politicians.

Daniszewski referred pointedly to the case of AP employee Bilal Hussein, an Iraqi photographer who was arrested and incarcerated for two years in Iraq before charges were dropped. "He was perceived as being too close to the 'other side' in Iraq," meaning the side of the US-backed Iraqi government. It was an internationally reported story, though hardly the only time the AP has received criticism and hostility for reporting the news, said Daniszewski.

"Sometimes we take stances because we essentially believe that the role of a correspondent or a photographer is to tell the truth as they see it, and sometimes that truth is not very palatable in the larger world."

News, he said, isn't always about violence and conflict. It is also defined by events that "counter prevailing perceptions and expectations. If you can tell a story that sheds insight into how things are seen on the street, say, in Pakistan and goes against the prevailing understanding of things, to me that's news too."

From Daniszewski's end of the telescope, providing more news than any one subscriber is likely to use is a definition of the job. But as was already becoming apparent on the panel, these days, with so much news vying for a shrinking budget, hard decisions about what valued resource to let go are made around the clock.

Once broached, the modern reality brought a stream of anecdotes and observations forward. National Public Radio's Deborah Amos suggested that for broadcast media in general, coverage of the Islamic world has effectively been reduced, and not for the better, to coverage of conflict. To illustrate, she referred to a tribal tradition in Jordan, which is used to resolve minor traffic accidents. Amos noted she once did a seventeen-minute piece for NPR on this institution. She said it would be all but impossible to get such a report on the air today. The network is putting money into bureaus in crisis-bound areas like Baghdad, Israel, and Palestine. NPR didn't replace its outgoing correspondent in Turkey who went to CNN. No hotspot there.

"In a lot of ways, reporting on a war is the easiest thing in the world to do," said NPR correspondent Jamie Tarabay. "'A bomb dropped; X amount of people died, and these are all the reactions.' To be able to do the features, to take it to the next step, to talk about the lives that are affected," all are at a premium these days. At the same time, it is maybe the most rewarding kind of work, for both the listeners and journalists.

Meanwhile, NPR has bolstered domestic coverage. Tarabay is an international correspondent now in the second year of a two-year project on Muslim life in the United States. She illustrated

that if a story on Jordanian traffic would be a tough sell today, something closer to home would get air time. She spoke of a recent Ramadan story she had done, about a fourteen year old American high school student. He was playing on the football team, and he was fasting. It was an all-American tale, of a youth trying to play sports while pleasing his parents; they had together decided this was the year he would fast.

Tarabay has made the domestic Muslim population her beat. Here is one powerful way to change the dynamic between the media and the Muslim world: to treat such a focus as essential, paradigmatic. It needs to be viewed as a core assignment, rather than as an expensive luxury.

The cost of covering hotspots has skyrocketed. Journalists are targets in many areas, making bodyguards and elaborate security precautions an expensive necessity. But the problems of covering a crisis zone aren't best met by trying to cover them from an office in New York, suggested Geneive Abdo, foreign policy analyst for the Century Foundation and author of *Mecca to Main Street*. She celebrated an effort by the Aspen Institute, called the Iran Civil Society Program, which gathers journalists and Iranian leaders and activists for regular forums in Germany.

She said that Iranian journalists and activists attending a recent forum in Germany provided a picture of the post-election demonstrations that was quite different from that given by journalists in the region. And she downplayed the role Twitter and Facebook played in connecting demonstrators; other than cell phones, she said, virtually no media got past state controls.

Jordanian traffic jams, fasting halfbacks, covering Iran from Germany—has it ever taken as much inventiveness to cover an assignment? For all the invention applied to the task, Walid El-Gabry indicated, perhaps little will change until the newsroom becomes a more open-minded and diverse place. He noted that American viewers watched a CNN that carried far less international news than CNN International. He also pondered how Arab media, even in places where political media is severely restricted, rely on foreign media far more for information than do Americans.

His appeal was to avoid gross generalizations. El-Gabry rooted the prevailing tendency to generalize in the homogenous staff of too many media outlets. “There is a lot of ignorance in the newsroom,” he said, “there’s not a lot of people in newsrooms from those regions.” He also suggested that journalists stop going to the same short list of “experts” who get called on over and over, calling them “ignorant” and noting that they often have an unacknowledged agenda.

Edina Lekovic, Communications Director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, advanced this point. She noted how networks share the same limited menu of Muslim talking heads, and lamented the fact that when she did see everyday Muslims interviewed on the news, it was “in a defensive posture,” forced by their questioner to declare “I am not a terrorist.”

“There is a problem when the only time we are called on is when something blows up,” she said.

Is More Better?

That Muslims world is not monolithic, and that there is no simple binary of good guys and bad guys in this narrative was brought home to one journalist, producer Howard Rosenberg, when he returned to Afghanistan after a three-year interval, for a *60 Minutes* report. He told of how

amazed he had been when he traveled from one valley to the next and encountered a new culture, language, and politics each time.

Rosenberg found “completely different groups with different aspirations, different thoughts about their national identity, how they fit into it, what they wanted from the US, what they wanted from the world community, what they wanted from the guy in the village next door.

“The breadth of covering the Muslim world, especially for someone who is frighteningly ignorant about it, is a daunting, intimidating task.”

As the part of the discussion looking at international and national mainstream coverage came to a close, two thoughts were left hanging in the air. The first was offered almost as a quip, by Marc Lynch, blogger for Foreign Policy.com and director of the Institute for Middle Eastern Studies at George Washington University. He noted how there used to be a wealth of reporting from Iraq, and now it is no longer so. “A lot of folks say ‘Oh, this is terrible,’” he added. But is it terrible? The major decisions seemingly have all been made in Iraq. “Maybe it’s not such a bad thing...It’s rational for airtime to be allocated elsewhere.” He suggested, agreeing with earlier panelists, that the biggest improvement might not be to boost coverage in Iraq, so much as to show Muslims in everyday situations at home in the US. Interviewing them in a story about health care, for instance, might lead to real progress. This was a theme that would reemerge later in the Dialogue.

Then Steven Waldman offered a riddle. He revisited the poll data that had been projected at the top of the morning, and provided an interpretation in the form of a question. He noted the data showed that after September 11, far more non-Muslim Americans believed Islam was inherently violent than before the attacks. And though the trend has peaked and slightly subsided in recent years, it is still far higher than it was on September 10.

“When you think about it, you might have expected it to be the other way around,” said Waldman. “We were attacked, people didn’t know much about Islam, it would have been entirely predictable for Americans to have very negative views of Islam, and for it to improve over time as they learned more. Instead it’s gone the other direction...”

Waldman talked about another report by Pew that looked at how much non-Muslim Americans know about Islam. Among other things Pew asked if they knew what ‘Allah’ meant and what the Koran was. In the years after the attacks, this kind of knowledge increased. But during the same period when the percentage of people who understood the fundamentals of Islam rose among all Americans, their negative views about the relationship of Islam and violence also rose.

All of which seemed to disprove what most present today probably believe, Waldman suggested: that as we learn more we become more tolerant and open-minded. Instead, the vast expansion of coverage of Islam around the world has made us more negative.

“Why that is, is a complicated question. At a minimum I think it points to the fact that quantity of information about Islam doesn’t really get you to the root of the conversation.”

Are facts enough? Are facts the point?

At the beginning of the morning session, an austere PowerPoint presentation presented data about Islam in America and Americans' attitudes about Islam.

At the end of the session, however, a video pulled from YouTube illustrated another approach to informing people about the Muslim world. This short video didn't really present data, though it seemed to. Most of all, it triggered emotion as it pushed a point crafted to generate fear, anxiety, and moral outrage. It didn't use facts—much of the information offered was clearly misleading or wrong.

The video was shown to the room. "In just 39 years," announced the narrator, "France will be an Islamic republic." A reasonable-sounding American voiceover moved the narrative along. It was deft, brisk, and didn't trust the viewer to think for themselves. It made PowerPoint technology seem like a leaky canoe beside a swift boat.

As Middle Eastern-sounding music reached a crescendo, the video made the claim that in a matter of years, "Europe as we know it will cease to exist." Since 1990, ninety percent of immigration into Europe "has been Islamic immigration." It said that the average French family had 1.8 children per family, while Muslims have 8.1 per family.

By 2027, viewers were warned, "one in five Frenchmen will be Muslim." And "in just thirty-nine years, France will be an Islamic republic. It's time to wake up."

When the clip was finished, it was announced that it had been seen some ten million times on YouTube.

After which, an examination of the clip by BBC Radio Four journalists was aired. It dutifully rebutted various statistics, first by replaying them, then pointing out the holes or misstatements in the claims.

"That is a disaster," exclaimed Brooke Gladstone. "That isn't how you counter lies." She suggested a better approach. "One book that has been incredibly important to me in understanding the new world is by Farhad Manjoo; it is called *Truth Enough*." Manjoo ponders the fate of the news in an era when the laptop provides your reality, and pundits provide the headlines. As Mark Twain put it, a lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes. In Manjoo's age and ours, lies have gotten much faster, suggested Gladstone.

"There have been lots of studies about how to counter them, how you correct the record. And the *one thing you can never do* is state the original claim...the fact is if you restate it, in about a day a young person will forget which was the lie and which was the truth. With people over the age of fifty, like me, in about thirty minutes we will start to muddle it up. So the last thing you want to do is restate the false premise.

"The fact is, how one responds is the stickiest wicket in this world. How do you correct the lie? All you can do is counter it with an abundance of truth..."

Start ups and starting over

The discussion turned in earnest to the subject of resources and tools available to journalists to help them do their job better. A list of Internet sites and human resources both in America and abroad were put on the table. Utley began by noting how he had watched the *Worldfocus* program on PBS the night before. It's an international news aggregator, gathering televised stories from all over the world. Utley told how that night's show included a clip from an Al-Jazeera reporter in Manila, covering the floods. He noted with approval how this network, often viewed with suspicion in the United States, had been covering central and South America, far from what most Americans probably think is its focus.

At the Paley Center the previous night, Christiane Amanpour called Al-Jazeera a valuable news source, noting how when she is traveling to a country where she can't get CNN, she next looks for Al-Jazeera. She had called the difficulty in finding the English language Al-Jazeera in the United States as "a huge problem."

Utley agreed and suggested the Qatar-based independent network was one new model worth noting. He turned to Charles Sennott to talk about another, GlobalPost.com.

It was a propitious moment for the new, Boston-based Web site. Just the day before, CBS and GlobalPost had announced a formal arrangement by which the international news Web site would provide CBS with access to content. Sennott called this "an insurance policy" for the network, by which CBS could draw on GlobalPost's seventy-five freelance foreign correspondents based in sixty countries around the world. In fact, the CBS/GlobalPost venture was just the sort of model that the *Media and the Muslim World* Dialogue was suggesting might help; creating a partnership between media entities that would supplement and improve coverage of the Muslim world.

In key ways, Sennott's story was GlobalPost's story. He described how a few years ago he had been the *Boston Globe's* Jerusalem bureau chief. It was, if not a golden age, at the least an interesting moment in international reporting for large dailies like the *Globe*, *Newsday*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. "They had really important foreign staffs. They weren't big, they weren't as big as the AP or as powerful as *Newsweek* or *Time* magazine, but they had interesting voices and I think some great reporters." Suddenly, as Sennott put it, that era came crashing down, and "that whole tradition was over."

There were dozens of foreign correspondents being called home to cover city council and water district hearings. Tough adjustments followed. "After you've covered Gaza, it's really hard to go back and cover the Board of Ed," Sennott explained.

GlobalPost has grown out of the collapse of foreign reporting. It is staffed not by "a rag tag group of freelancers," Sennott said, but by "some of the top reporters in these regions who have really struggled in recent years" due to media cutbacks. GlobalPost contracts with correspondents to file a feed once a week, which keeps the Web site fresh. Editors post ten stories a day on the site, changing the lead piece three times a day.

A selection of the ongoing series "Life, Death and the Taliban" was put on screen, and Sennott described the package of stories, which have been detailing the interwoven stories of Pakistan

and Afghanistan alongside the rise of the Taliban in the region. Sennott has been making excursions into the area for over a decade, as has photographer Seamus Murphy. They work in conjunction with correspondents reporting on the ground in the region to tell a story that's complex and far from over.

Audio and video clips and print stories were displayed. Sennott talked about making sense of all the different media on a single Web page. "The hardest thing in multimedia and online media right now is: how do you integrate all of the photography, the video, the audio, and the written stories that we want to tell? How do you have them complement each other and not overlap and be cumbersome?"

The variety of media makes it possible for broadcasters and publishers to use GlobalPost with their own formats. The media are interwoven on the site, however, in an attempt to make GlobalPost a unique Web experience that will attract a strong core audience of news consumers.

Utley stepped in to ask pointedly how many hits the site was attracting, and about GlobalPost's business model. How does it raise, and how does it plan to make, money?

"We are a ten million dollar startup, we are ninety percent capitalized," Sennott answered.

"We have our funding set for three years. We have three years to become profitable, and we believe we can do that. We really are seeing, even in a tough economy, that the traffic numbers we are getting, and the *kind* of traffic we are getting, is attractive to advertisers."

It was a measured forecast. "Given the fact we're in the great recession, our investors are pleased with where we are. We didn't meet our revenue goals, but we had a pretty tough year to do a startup, so we are happy with where we got. That revenue comes from advertising online. We've teamed with Bank of America, Liberty Mutual, and several other advertisers, including the Harvard Business School. We've brought them on as long-term advertisers."

A second revenue stream was from newspapers that will join with GlobalPost in a syndication arrangement. So far, about twenty newspapers, most of them American, have signed up. Sennott noted how GlobalPost recently teamed with the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* to produce a package of stories timed to the G-20 summit in Pittsburgh that month. They provided twenty features to the daily paper in the twenty days before the event kicked off, reporting from various corners of the world. They also provided local coverage for the paper.

The third component of the funding plan, Sennott explained, was the most difficult to make work. It is the pay wall structure, a subscription model that provides those paying a fee access to special in-depth, more analytical reports that in some ways transcend the shorter print stories available for free. The achievable goal is to improve and expand journalism, to improve coverage of the Muslim world for any partner. It is a replicable model that helps show a way forward.

Pat Mitchell then spoke about Pulsewire, an even newer startup. Dedicated to presenting stories by and about women from around the world, the site began as a quarterly magazine and aspires to be a full-blown online news service.

Mitchell and Utley both spoke about LinkTV, the satellite television network that provides a host of programming from around the world, with an emphasis on local reporting that has resonance beyond borders. Programming includes *Mosaic: World News from the Middle East*, which aggregates and translates stories from all over the region. It also presents *Witness*, a daily half-hour program of independently made documentaries spotlighting ordinary people that originates on Al-Jazeera English.

Several other noteworthy institutions were mentioned. Utley pointed to the Bureau for International Reporting, a video news production company with a focus on international reporting. PBS's News Hour has used many of their pieces. Also mentioned:

News 21 is an initiative sponsored by twenty-one research universities, using foundation resources to train young journalists to think globally. Supported by the Carnegie-Knight Initiative, News 21 works inside journalism schools to integrate them into the surrounding university community. Simultaneously, the program links research centers to launch complicated investigative projects. In a time when costly investigative journalism is being cut back, News 21 is engendering trans-institutional teamwork by groups all over the map. By fostering new approaches at the training level, coverage of the complexities of the Muslim world can be improved. And resource-sharing practices needed to get the word out can be institutionalized.

Ground Report is among the most visionary new approaches to news gathering. It merges social media platforms with international content. Ground Report views Twitter as an early warning system for world events, YouTube as the canary in the coalmine; filtering its numerous contributions through a panel of editors, it has reported on Bollywood representations of Islam, Afghan responses to Obama's war plans, and Iranian men who don the hijab in protest. There is reach here. *Business Week* has called Ground Report's founder, Rachel Sterne, one of "America's most promising social entrepreneurs."

Walid El-Gabry recommended Mideastwire.com, an Internet news service that provides translations of news reports from all across the region. Mideastwire.com is a powerful effort to represent the spectrum of regional newsgathering. It's a subscriber-based daily email newsletter that culls indigenous reports from some twenty-two Arab nations, Iran, and the Arabian diaspora. Employing a roster of regional translators, Mideastwire offers a daily digest of news and opinion, translated for English speakers. It also offers a ranging set of ever-changing links to American stories and online posts that dispute any notion of a monolith, either among Muslims or American news consumers.

Though there is a wealth of sources for international reporting, Gladstone voiced a caveat to the abundance. "The fact is, all of this information is out there. I don't think the problem is a lack of reporting. I think the problem is the lack of attention."

She referenced Matthew Hindman's recent book, *The Myth of Digital Democracy*, describing its premise: "there is as much absorption of information as there ever was. No more, no less. But people who want to know more, do know more, and people who want to be apathetic are just as apathetic as they ever were."

“So,” Gladstone asked, “what is the goal here? Is the goal to create, in the parlance of one of our funders, to create a ‘just and peaceful world’? Is it to improve the image of Muslims in the United States? Is it simply to get more information out there?”

Because if presenting data is the goal, she indicated, it’s mission accomplished in the age of the Internet search. But if the goal is to reach, and move, masses, a different approach is necessary. Gladstone referred to a Pew study from a few years ago, which looked at local news coverage. Once upon a time the mantra of local news was “if it bleeds, it leads,” meaning violence and sensationalism got ratings.

Not so much anymore, though. According to Pew, Gladstone said, “Now you can hold the same audiences with complex policy discussions. Why is that? It’s because all the people who used to get entertainment out of the news, have been siphoned off to real entertainment. The audience has changed.”

People who want news and information will find news and information sources; those who want car crashes will watch “Car Crash TV.” But, Gladstone continued, if you are a news provider who wants car crash numbers, *then* you need to rethink most familiar approaches, and reach far beyond news media for inspiration and ideas. If that is your goal, she said, perhaps representatives from Hollywood needed to be invited in on the conversation.

Daniszewski continued the thought. He was struck by the experience of hearing from citizens who expected to see themselves in the news they consumed. He noted how when a reporter was in Gaza, they would regularly hear the comment “why don’t you tell the story of the Palestinians who are being victimized?” Should that reporter go to Israel, they might expect to hear “why aren’t you telling the story of the people being killed by the missiles flying into our country?”

He saw this as a highly selective approach to the news. And the best way to transcend it was by great story telling. “You have to present stories in a way that people can relate to them, and feel the relevance to their lives.”

Utlely presented anecdotal information to turn the conversation around. He recounted how when he was at CNN, a chart hung on the wall, illustrating just how viewers’ attention waxed and waned concurrent with global events. Of course the Gulf War was a big moment for CNN, but he noted that the fall of the Berlin Wall barely eked out a bump in viewers’ habits. The Wall was an event Utlely called “a really well-crafted literary tale,” but CNN viewers weren’t having it. Meanwhile, the biggest spike on the whole chart was for an episode of Larry King Live, with Vice President Al Gore debating H. Ross Perot on the merits of NAFTA. The message was: stories are nice and all, but if the viewer’s pocketbook is involved, that will guarantee a high rating.

Sennott agreed. He spoke of the volume of words and images included in the “Life, Death and the Taliban” package. But the story that “rocketed” from the site, he said, was a pocketbook story. It was a report about how US government money was being sent to NGOs in Afghanistan, from there to subcontractors, and ending up in the hands of the Taliban. That piece was the one that was picked up by CBS News, and, Sennott said, helped lead to the deal with CBS.

True Believers

The discussion of bloggers and other online resources and the Middle East began with Marc Lynch, who for six years blogged on his own as Abu Aardvark. With that nom de plume, Lynch wrote about Middle East politics, the Arab media, and the world of diplomacy. In January, he began blogging under the aegis of ForeignPolicy.com. *The Washington Post* bought *Foreign Policy* magazine in late 2008 and redesigned its Web site.

Many in the field were peeved earlier this year when an unnamed White House aide taunted that political bloggers should “take off their pajamas” and get real. But Lynch, who has all but dropped the Abu Aardvark moniker since joining Foreign Policy.com, said he “jumped on Foreign Policy.com because it was very clear to me that the days of the individual blogger were largely over.”

To him, solo, unpaid blogging is unsustainable, while Foreign Policy provided a solid base for a collective effort. He has an editor, and he doesn’t mind having one. In one crucial way, though, he acknowledged that he’s facing an issue earlier bloggers faced: how to make it pay. “We’re all winning it, but it’s not at all clear that there’s a business model there.”

ForeignPolicy.com has a selective audience, a point that was driven home when the relaunched site found it was getting a lot of attention for Laura Rozen’s reporting on who was getting jobs in the Obama administration. That’s when he realized who his audience was—a small, highly educated group of editors, academics, and foreign policy wonks. For him, that’s a great readership, a group he’s happy to be a member of. Lynch acknowledged that might not make his boss, struggling to turn a profit, quite so happy.

Waldman, cofounder of Beliefnet.com, offered encouragement to bloggers that “it can have a happy ending. We did eventually find a business model that’s brought us to sustainability.”

How long did it take? somebody asked.

“We’ve been around for ten years. The precipitating event for us becoming profitable was going bankrupt. I’m not necessarily advising that as a business plan,” he quickly added.

But once they filed, the effect was to force Beliefnet staffers to take a long, hard look at all their great ideas and toss out the ones that weren’t working. Ultimately, they held on to one revenue source—advertising—and found their way to profitability.

Building on what Gladstone had said, Waldman noted the amazing thing about the Internet was that it is really good at letting one find just the opinions and information they want to find, without encountering dissonance or contradictory information.

Final Observations

Irshad Manji revisited the notion that the days of the lone blogger making a difference were over. In cases where clerical, governmental, or even media authorities censor new thinking about Islam, bloggers may be the only ones who can break through. She noted that in 2006, three young Muslim-Americans were set to come out with the first reformist translation of the Koran.

They had a contract with a major American publisher. But then came the political cartoons in Denmark followed by the “cartoon riots.”

Suddenly, the publisher of the reformist translation of the Koran had reservations. So they sent the manuscript to a conservative religious scholar, who advised against publication. On this basis, the contract was abruptly terminated. The young Muslim-Americans were given no opportunity to respond.

In an earlier era, that would have been the end of the story. But in this era, Manji pointed out, bloggers can step in and circumvent any establishment that refuses to distribute information. For example, Manji has worked around the censorship of her own book, *The Trouble with Islam Today*, in the Middle East. She has translated it into Arabic, Urdu, and Farsi, then posted the translations on her Web site for free download. To date, it has been downloaded over a million times.

In the same spirit, Manji offered the translators of the reformist Koran the opportunity to post their unpublished work on her Web site for free download. They accepted her invitation, and have since found a thriving cottage industry in posting PDFs of other little-known works about Islamic reform. Manji suggested these are only a few examples of activists, artists, and writers turning with the technological currents. “We are using censorship to our advantage,” she said.

Daisy Khan recalled a statement made by journalist Christopher Dickey of *Newsweek*, which asserted that extremists thrive on “testosterone, a narrative fantasy, and a desire to make theater” and suggested that it wasn’t just Al Qaeda and the Taliban who thrive on this feeling. She noted that many members of the media operate on the assumption that “if it bleeds, it leads.”

“I used to constantly complain to my friends in the media that we—Muslim women—don’t get covered,” she said. “And then a very close friend of mine, who is an Arab journalist...sat me down and said, ‘perception is shaped by reality on the ground.’ He said if the reality is that there’s violence on the ground, and that violence is constantly reported, *that* will shape the perception of the public.

“He said for every one negative incident, you need four positive stories to balance it. So every time I see Al Qaeda’s horrific events being reported in the media, I wonder in despair about when are we going to see four positive stories to offset the negative ones?”

She encouraged panelists to make use of, the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow Web site, which pinpoint and nurture Muslim moderates and steer the media to them. This is an organization established in 2004 by the American Society for Muslim Advancement. Members are all Muslims under the age of forty-five, some significantly younger, working for positive change. They receive leadership and media training. The MLT garnered a lot of attention for a joint letter they sent to President Obama in January of 2009; signed by about 300 members from over seventy countries, it urged the president to establish new, constructive ties to the Islamic world. It was published in the *Washington Post* and was covered by press around the world. Then came a remarkable offer from Khan. She offered to work as a conduit to the MLT, and to help furnish journalists with sources and commentators as needed on numerous topics, from places all around the globe. “Brilliant people, on the ground, ready to do work,” is how she described them. She also encouraged panelists to visit the WISE Muslim Women Web site

(wisemuslimwomen.org), founded by the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality. It contains information about such issues as domestic violence and female genital mutilation. It also provides a wealth of material for activists, fundraisers, and journalists seeking contacts and information on many Islamic topics.

Lekovic recounted what could be seen as the other side of the 9/11 phenomenon—the inverse of the usual sense that Americans' perception of Islam has been tainted by the terrorists. She described an increasing mistrust of the media, and a fatigue felt by Muslim leaders continually asked to comment on violence, and really, to proclaim themselves as non-violent.

She also seconded the point that Hollywood figures should be involved in the conversation. “I’ve told folks at ABC this: my goal is to get a Muslim doctor on Grey’s Anatomy. A doctor who just happens to be Muslim. That’s the goal...If you quote an economist on an economy story who just happens to have an Arab or Southeastern Asian sounding name, then we’ve reached some kind of success.” She also made the extraordinary appeal to the journalists at the table to use her as a guide to the Muslim American community. Call her with your questions, and tell others to call her as well, she urged.

“Half the calls I get are 411 calls,” she said, recounting a typical one: “I’m looking for an Iraqi family... that are refugees...that are living in San Diego. It’s like a dating service, and I don’t mind that.

“I’m just interested in getting better stories.”

She recounted a familiar situation, in which members of an American Muslim center or mosque flee when the TV cameras arrive without announcement. The community needs to meet the press, get to know you first, she urged; she would help see that this was done, and introductions made. It was an attempt to broaden first of all, the list of talking heads, but more than that, a way to bridge the media and the Muslim world by helping journalists formulate meaningful relationships with sources.

El-Gabry returned to the issue of diversity, urging those in the room to make a point of hiring interns who did not look like them. “Nothing is going to change until you have a more representative media,” he declared.

Near the end, Lawrence Pintak described a gap between aspirations and realpolitik, a gap that needed to be closed if things were to change. As an academic and journalist, he had been on a flurry of such panels—American and Muslim media, European and Muslim media, Southeast Asian, etc. “But we all know our business, and know that when the war breaks out, it’s reduced to the lowest common denominator. It’s black and white, it’s good guy and bad guy, it’s the terrorist militia Hezbollah and—I don’t even need to finish the story, do I?

“So those of us in the business, keep that in mind...always keep it in the back of your mind that if we reduce it to the lowest common denominator, we don’t educate the audience.”

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

One of the primary goals of our conference was to introduce to participants new resources and tools to improve coverage of the Muslim world. Below is a summary of the most important findings. The resources and tools are broken down into three groups. The first of these is a list of reporting networks, which seek to confront the increasing cost of coverage of international news through partnerships with traditional media outlets. The second section suggests notable online research tools, and offers a short list of sites which present quality information and analysis. (For a longer list of reliable Web sites suggested by participants, see the next section of this report.) The third section considers human resources—the people who are available to help guide journalists covering the Muslim world.

Reporting Networks and Partnerships

One way to confront the increasing cost of coverage of international news is through partnerships between traditional media outlets and new reporting networks.

- GlobalPost (globalpost.com) is an Internet journalism site devoted exclusively to international news and related content. Their mission is to provide Americans and all English-language readers around the world, with a depth, breadth, and quality of original international reporting that has been steadily diminished in too many American newspapers and television networks. And they are actively seeking partners, having already made agreements to provide their coverage to outlets including CBS News, the *New York Daily News*, and *Worldfocus* among many others.
- Bureau for International Reporting (thebir.org), cofounded by Kyra Kay and Jason Maloney, is a nonprofit video news production company dedicated to offering affordable coverage of overlooked international news stories to American news providers and hence the underserved American public.
- GroundReport (groundreport.com), founded by Rachel Sterne, is a citizen journalism site with a wide international reach. Its world news platform combines digital reporting tools and a selective human network to power global citizen journalism on the Web. Reporters submit articles, photos, or videos of news events to GroundReport, which are vetted by editorial staff prior to publication. Content partners with verified status bypass the submission queue, publishing instantly.
- PulseWire (worldpulse.com/pulswire), founded by Jensine Larsen, is a media enterprise covering global issues through the eyes of women. They are dedicated to listening to and broadcasting the unheard voices and innovative solutions of women worldwide. They produce *World Pulse Magazine* as well as PulseWire, an interactive community newswire where women can speak for themselves to the world and connect to solve global problems.

Notable Online Research Tools

The next challenge discussed by participants was the glut of online information and resources—making it difficult to find quality tools. A number of journalists and bloggers provide first-rate

online information and analysis of the Muslim world, including participants Genieve Abdo, Marc Lynch, and Steven Waldman. The following is a sample of some of the most successful sites for research and analysis.

- Bitter Lemons (bitterlemons.org) is a Web site that presents Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints on prominent issues of concern. It focuses on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and peace process. It is produced, edited and partially written by Ghassan Khatib, a Palestinian, and Yossi Alpher, an Israeli. They also feature a free, downloadable book.
- Beliefnet (beliefnet.com) founded by Steve Waldman, is the largest spiritual site on the Internet. They are independent and not affiliated with any spiritual organization or movement. They provide their audience with access to the best spiritual teachers and clergy in the world, thought-provoking commentary, and a supportive community.
- insideIRAN (insideiran.org), launched by The Century Foundation, is a special project taking readers inside the political crisis in Iran. TCF fellow and Iran analyst Geneive Abdo leads the project Web site, which features articles, analysis, and the latest media reports from some of the world's most prominent Iranian scholars, journalists, and bloggers.
- The International Center for Journalists' *Fighting Words: How Arab and American Journalists Can Break Through to Better Coverage* (icfj.org/Resources/FightingWords/tabid/1168/Default.aspx) is a nuts and bolts guide about coverage issues including stereotypes, loaded words and images. It has an extremely useful appendix and resource guide.
- Link TV's *Mosaic* /(linktv.org/mosaic) is a daily compendium of reports from broadcasters throughout the Middle East, all translated into English.
- Dr. Marc Lynch's blog (lynch.foreignpolicy.com) Dr. Lynch started blogging in 2002 under the name Abu Aardvark. In 2005, it was revealed to be the work of Marc Lynch, an associate professor of political science at George Washington University and author of *Voices of the New Arab Public* (Columbia University Press). He is currently blogging on *Foreign Policy*'s Web site and writes about Middle East politics, Arab media, Iraq, Islamist movements, and whatever else interests him.

In addition, there is a more extensive list of recommended Web sites vetted by Dialogue participants in our downloadable report of the *Media and the Muslim World* conference.

Human resources

One of the principles of improving coverage of the Muslim world was laid out by Christiane Amanpour during the keynote conversation. She spoke of the need for journalists to get out and talk to people in the Muslim community and make first-hand, personal connections to the subjects of their stories. This lack of the personal has been a criticism of some journalism that does not reach into the community or that only relies on the usual suspects as experts and representatives of the Muslim community.

The discussion of human resources provided some eye-opening opportunities to improve coverage of the Muslim world.

- Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (muslimleadersoftomorrow.org), founded by Daisy Khan, is an organization of more than 300 Muslims around the world who are media trained and ready to speak about the issues relating to Muslims across the board—from religion, to security, to business. The MLTs provide what they call an ‘opposition voice’ to the extremists. Khan offered to assist journalists who are seeking experts, commentators, or just everyday people, for their stories.
- Muslim Public Affairs Council (mpac.org) Edina Lekovic, Communications Director, acts as a spokeswoman for the American Muslim community to media outlets, government officials, interfaith leaders, academic institutions, and community groups. She helps lead journalists in their quest for information about the Muslim world. Lekovic offered to guide journalists who are seeking guidance toward the Muslim American community for their stories.
- Religion Newswriters Association offers a number of interesting resources, including *Islam: A Guide to US Experts and Organizations* on their ReligionLink site (religionlink.com). This guide contains more than 100 experts who specialize in such areas as civil rights, politics, foreign affairs, art, culture, history, law, family issues, and more. It also includes information on Muslim advocacy organizations, research centers, and think tanks.
- Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association (AMEJA; ameja.org) serves as a clearing house for journalists seeking on-the-ground assistance throughout the Muslim world, providing recommendations on hiring experienced translators, guides, and local journalists. They also provide advice to organizations seeking to recruit and hire their member journalists.

Research Sources from Participants

A preconference survey and discussion during our conference generated a list of online resources that our participants were already using. We include that list here, on the assumption that our experts in the field have combed research material and esteem these sites as valuable sources of information.

The following are the resources cited by at least one participant.

- Abu Muqawama blog: cnas.org/blogs/abumuqawama
A blog which says it is dedicated to following issues related to contemporary insurgencies as well as counterinsurgency tactics and strategy.
- Afpax Insider: afpax.com/
A news site describing itself as, “Your one stop Af-Pak info sources.”
- Ahmed Rashid: ahmedrashid.com/
The blog of Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid, author of the book, *Descent Into Chaos*.

- Al-Hayat: daralhayat.com/morenews/english/
One of the leading daily pan-Arab newspapers.
- Al-Jazeera: english.aljazeera.net
The English language Web site of the television news network.
- Angry Arab: angryarab.net/
The blog of As'ad AbuKhalil, professor of political science at California State University, Stanislaus and visiting professor at UC, Berkeley.
- The Arabist: arabist.net/
The Arabist says it is dedicated to covering the politics and culture of the Arab world. It is published in Cairo.
- Asharq al-Awsat: aawsat.com/english/
Asharq Al-Awsat calls itself “the world’s premier pan-Arab daily newspaper, printed simultaneously on four continents in twelve cities.”
- AMEJA: ameja.org
The home of the Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association, which features a very impressive resources page on their Web site, providing links through the media directory and links pages to major media outlets and other organizations.
- Dr. Barham Salih: twitter.com/barhamSalih and barhamsalih.net/
Dr. Salih is the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government.
- Daily Star Beirut: dailystar.com.lb/
The Daily Star is the on-line edition of the Lebanese newspaper and calls itself, “the Web’s leading source of Lebanese and regional news.”
- Iraq Oil Report: iraqoilreport.com/
Iraq Oil Report claims it is the world leader in providing business, political, and security news and analysis on Iraq.
- Jakarta Post: thejakartapost.com/
The online home of the Indonesian newspaper.
- Long War Journal: longwarjournal.org/
The Long War Journal says it is “dedicated to providing original and accurate reporting and analysis of the Long War (also known as the Global War on Terror).”
- Al-Masry al-Youm: almasry-alyoum.com/default.aspx?l=en
The online, English language home of the Egyptian newspaper.
- MERIP: merip.org/index.html
The Middle East Research and Information Project and the Middle East Report Online

- Mideastwire.com: mideastwire.com/
Mideastwire.com offers a daily email newsletter of concise, translated briefs covering some of the key pieces appearing in the media of the twenty-two Arab countries, Iran, and the Arab Diaspora.
- The Mideast Mirror: middleeastmirror.ning.com/
An online publication devoted to fostering a deeper understanding of the Middle East and to promoting constructive dialogue about the region and its relationship with the United States.
- The National (Dubai): thenational.ae/
The online edition of the *The National* newspaper from the UAE.
- Tehranbureau.com (Frontline): pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/
An independent source of news on Iran and the Iranian Diaspora, Tehran Bureau is a “virtual” news bureau.

In addition, our participants also recommended these mainstream media outlets and reporters to their contributions:

- BBC: bbc.co.uk
- *The Guardian*: guardian.co.uk/
- Dan Harris (ABC News): abcnews.go.com/WN/dan-harris/story?id=126893
- *Newsweek*: newsweek.com
- *The New York Times*: nytimes.com/
- National Public Radio: npr.org/
- *The Wall Street Journal*: online.wsj.com
- *The Washington Post*: washingtonpost.com

Dialogue Participant Biographies

Geneive Abdo: Analyst, The Century Foundation

Geneive Abdo is the director of The Century Foundation’s Iran program in Washington, DC and the editor of insideIRAN.org. Before joining the Century Foundation, she was liaison for the United Nation’s Alliance of Civilizations, a project created by the UN Secretary General to improve relations between Western and Islamic societies.

Abdo’s latest book, *Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America After 9/11*, is the first detailed, investigative work of the Muslim community in the United States since the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Abdo’s twenty-year journalism career centered upon coverage of the Middle East and the Islamic world. From 1998 to 2001 Abdo was the Iran correspondent for the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, and a regular contributor to *The Economist*. She was the first American journalist to be based in Tehran since the United States

cut off ties with Iran in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Her insightful stories made international headlines and prompted published threats of imprisonment by the government. Abdo was forced to flee the country in 2001, and is not allowed to return.

Abdo was based in Cairo as the the Middle East correspondent for *The Dallas Morning News* reporting from Algeria, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and the Persian Gulf. As a correspondent for Reuters, Abdo worked in Moscow, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Georgia.

Abdo's commentaries and essays on Islam have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Washington Quarterly*, *The International Herald Tribune*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *Middle East Report*. She has been a commentator on *Now with Bill Moyers*, National Public Radio, the BBC, *The Jim Lehrer News Hour*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and CNN.

Abdo is the author of *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* and co-author of *Answering Only to God: Faith and Freedom in Twenty-First Century Iran*, which predicted the recent takeover of the Iranian regime by hard-liners.

Deborah Amos: Foreign Correspondent, NPR

Deborah Amos covers Iraq for NPR News. Her reports can be heard on NPR's award-winning *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Weekend Edition*. She has returned to work with NPR after a decade in television news, including ABC's *Nightline* and *World News Tonight* and the PBS programs *Now with Bill Moyers* and *Frontline*.

Prior to her work with ABC News, Amos spent sixteen years with NPR, where she was most recently the London bureau chief. Previously she was based in Amman, Jordan, as an NPR foreign correspondent. Amos has won several awards, including an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award and a Breakthru Award, and earned widespread recognition for her coverage of the Gulf War in 1991. She spent 1991-92 as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, and is the author of *Lines in the Sand: Desert Storm and the Remaking of the Arab World*.

She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

David Clark: Executive Producer of Weekend News and Programming, Fox News

David Clark has been in one or another form of broadcasting for thirty-five years. His roots go back almost half a century to the day when Clark was playing with toy walkie-talkies and he realized that he could communicate with people without having to deal with them face-to-face. This revelation combined with his interest in history and current events brought him to the news business. Since his childhood, Clark has spent his waking hours (and some sleeping ones) in front of and behind microphones, cameras, and keyboards. His paychecks have come from CBS, ABC, CNN, and Fox as well as a smattering of lesser known but equally entertaining entities. David Clark is currently the Executive Producer of Weekend News and Programming at Fox News Channel. So while the rest of you are at the beach or on the slopes, David Clark is busy making sure you don't forget there's a world out there.

John Daniszewski: Vice President, Senior Managing Editor, International News, Associated Press

John Daniszewski assumed the position of senior managing editor for International News and Photography at the Associated Press in early 2009. Prior to that, he was the managing editor for International News. As senior managing editor, he oversees more than 700 journalists in about 100 bureaus outside the United States and the AP's worldwide and US photo operations.

Daniszewski returned to the AP after serving ten years as a foreign correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*. He has covered some of the most significant social and political changes of our time, along with conflicts in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Daniszewski was the *Times* correspondent in Cairo, Moscow, Baghdad, and most recently, bureau chief in London. In 2003, he was based in Baghdad, staying through the US invasion, the toppling of Saddam Hussein's government and the unrest that followed. For the *Times*, he was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 2003 and was a member of a reporting team that was a finalist for 2006 Pulitzer Prize and won an Overseas Press Club award. Prior to his work at the *Times*, Daniszewski worked for the AP, covering the collapse of communism in Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the election of President Nelson Mandela and the assumption of black majority rule in South Africa.

In 1989, he was shot in the arm and seriously wounded at a checkpoint while covering the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania.

In addition to the war in Iraq, Daniszewski has covered conflicts in Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Chechnya, and the aftermaths of civil war in Rwanda and Angola.

Walid El-Gabry: President, Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association and Finance Editor, Bloomberg

Walid El-Gabry is the President of the Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association, a nonprofit organization for media professionals of Arab and Middle Eastern descent. He is also an Anglo-Egyptian journalist with two decades of experience working internationally. He currently works as an editor at Bloomberg News and previously managed a team of editors at Dow Jones Newswires. El-Gabry spent nine years at *The Financial Times* based in both London and New York, responsible for corporate coverage of the Americas.

El-Gabry's newspaper career began in Istanbul in the late 1980s working for Turkish publisher Sabah. He then worked for Canadian publisher Thomson Corp at various UK titles, becoming industry editor of a major Scottish daily newspaper. He was a judge in the 2007 Gerald Loeb business journalism awards.

Kate Felsen: Senior Producer, ABC News

Kate Felsen is a senior producer for *ABC News: World News*. Over the course of her career at ABC she has received eleven Emmy Awards. A magna cum laude graduate of Harvard, Felsen earned a master's degree in American foreign policy and international economics from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Brooke Gladstone: Co-Host and Managing Editor, *On the Media*

Brooke Gladstone started out in print journalism, writing on defense policy, strip-mining, broadcasting, and cable TV. Her freelance pieces have appeared in the *London Observer*, the

Boston Globe, the *Washington Post* and *The American Journalism Review*, among others. She also covered public broadcasting for *Current*, and wrote and edited theater, film, and music reviews for *The Washington Weekly*.

Gladstone served as senior editor of the NPR newsmagazine, *All Things Considered*. She was awarded a Knight Fellowship at Stanford in 1991 and a year later she was in Russia, reporting on the bloody insurgency of the Russian Parliament and other stories for NPR. In 1995, NPR created its brand new media beat and gave it to Gladstone, who covered it for six years from NPR's New York bureau in midtown Manhattan, until she was tapped by WNYC to help re-launch *On The Media*.

Gladstone has won several awards including an Overseas Press Club Award, a Peabody and the Milwaukee Press Club's Sacred Cat Award for lifetime achievement.

Nisid Hajari: Director of Editorial Development, *Newsweek*

Nisid Hajari was appointed director of editorial development for *Newsweek* in May 2009. In that capacity he edits and directs coverage of international news for the magazine, and oversees special projects, partnerships, and brand extensions. Previously he served as managing editor of *Newsweek International*, managing the overseas edition. He joined the magazine in February 2001 as Asia editor. During his tenure, the magazine has won dozens of editorial, photo, and design awards for its international coverage, including a New York Press Club award for "Into Thin Air: The Hunt for Osama bin Laden," which he edited.

Before coming to *Newsweek*, Hajari worked as associate editor for *Time Asia* in Hong Kong. He received General Excellence Awards from the Society of Publishers in Asia for the "Time 100: Asians of the Century" special issue and for "An Asian Journey: From Sapporo to Surabaya." Hajari was a staff writer for *Time Asia*, *Time International* and *Entertainment Weekly*.

Andrew Heyward: Senior Advisor, Marketspace LLC/Monitor Group

Andrew Heyward is a senior advisor to Marketspace LLC, a subsidiary of Monitor Group that specializes in helping companies use digital technology to drive growth and revenue by enhancing customer interactions. He works with clients to create and strengthen original online content, make more effective use of broadband video, deepen engagement through online communities, and develop new business models for the digital era.

Heyward was president of CBS News from January 1996 to November 2005. Under Heyward's leadership, CBS was recognized with fifty-seven News and Documentary Emmys, thirteen Peabodys, thirteen Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, six Overseas Press Club Awards and forty-six RTNDA/Edward R. Murrow Awards. The list of Murrows includes seven for Overall Excellence: four for television—including 2003, 2004, and 2005—and three on the radio side.

Heyward also spearheaded CBS News's move into new media. Its award-winning Web site, CBSNews.com, became increasingly competitive and was a leader in providing free, advertiser-supported broadband video. Heyward also was a key force in the establishment of the leading financial news Web site, CBS MarketWatch, and served on its board of directors from its founding in 1997 until its acquisition by Dow Jones in January 2005.

Heyward previously served as executive producer of CBS Evening News, and Vice President, CBS News. He was also responsible for developing and launching *48 Hours*, the primetime CBS News hour that premiered in January 1988. He has won twelve national Emmy Awards.

Janice Kaplan: Editor, *Parade*

Editor of *Parade* since November 2007, Janice Kaplan guides this Sunday newspaper magazine which is distributed in more than 510 newspapers nationwide. Reaching more than 74 million readers each week, *Parade* is America's largest magazine.

Before coming to *Parade*, Kaplan was deputy editor of *TV Guide Magazine* and executive producer of the TV Guide Television Group, where she created and produced more than thirty television specials that aired primetime on ABC, FOX, VH1, and other networks. A former contributing editor at *Vogue* and columnist at *Seventeen*, she began her career as an on-air sports reporter for CBS Radio. She went on to be a producer at ABC-TV's *Good Morning America*, where she won awards for investigative reporting.

Kaplan is the author and co-author of eleven books, including the bestselling novels *The Botox Diaries*, *Mine Are Spectacular!*, and *The Men I Didn't Marry*. Her latest novel, *A Job to Kill For*, was published last year by Touchstone.

Daisy Khan: Executive Director, American Society for Muslim Advancement

Daisy Khan is executive director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA), a New York based nonprofit dedicated to strengthening an expression of Islam based on cultural and religious harmony and building bridges between Muslims and the general public.

In 2004, she launched the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) program to cultivate and amplify a global network of young Muslim leaders committed to improving their respective communities. In response to the continued marginalization of women in Muslim communities, Khan established the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE), successfully launched in 2006. WISE represents a global network of Muslim women leaders dedicated to creating positive and sustainable change in their communities.

Khan has appeared on CNN, Al-Jazeera, and BBC World's *Doha Debates*, and she often serves as an adviser and contributor to a variety of documentaries, including PBS's *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*, National Geographic's *Inside Mecca*, and the Hallmark Channel's *Listening to Islam*. Khan is a weekly contributor to the *Washington Post*'s "On Faith" blog and is frequently quoted in print publications such as *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Saudi Gazette*, and the *Khaleej Times*.

Kashmir-born Khan is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Interfaith Center's Award for Promoting Peace and Interfaith Understanding, Auburn Seminary's Lives of Commitment Award, the Annual Faith Leaders Award, and she was selected one of the 21 Leaders for the 21st Century.

Edina Lekovic: Communications Director, Muslim Public Affairs Council

Edina Lekovic is the director of communications for the Muslim Public Affairs Council, a national public policy organization which works with decision makers in government, media, and policy institutions to shape policy and public opinion, and also works to develop dynamic young leaders. Lekovic acts as a spokesperson to media outlets, government officials, interfaith

leaders, academic institutions, and community groups. Lekovic has made many appearances in national media, including Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, NPR, BBC, and the History Channel. She has also been featured in several leading newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Times*, *Associated Press*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Los Angeles Times*.

Lekovic has been fortunate to participate in a number of national and international conferences speaking on a variety of issues related to Muslim Americans. She has served as editor to a handful of books, including *In Pursuit of Justice* (2005), *American Muslims: Voir Dire* (2002), and *Jihad vs. Terrorism* (2002). She is also one of the founders of Elev8, an arts-based leadership program for Muslim American youth. Lekovic holds a master's degree in communication from Pepperdine University, and a BA in American literature and culture from UCLA.

Marc Lynch: Blogger, Foreignpolicy.com

Marc Lynch is associate professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, where he is the director of the Institute for Middle East Studies. He is also a non-resident senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security.

Lynch publishes frequently on the politics of the Middle East, with a particular focus on the Arab media and information technology, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, and Islamist movements. He also works on public diplomacy and strategic communications. His most recent book, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Al-Jazeera, Iraq, and Middle East Politics Today*, was selected as a Choice Outstanding Academic Book.

Recent publications of note include "Politics First: Why Only U.S. Withdrawal Can Spur Iraqi Cooperation" in *Foreign Affairs* (November 2008); "Thinking Strategically About Iraq" (with Colin Kahl and Brian Katulis) in *Middle East Policy* (Spring 2008); "Brothers in Arms: How to Talk to America (Memo to the Muslim Brotherhood)" in *Foreign Policy* (Sept./Oct. 2007); "Young [Muslim] Brothers in Cyberspace" in *Middle East Report* (November-December 2007); "Blogging the New Arab Public" in *Arab Media and Society* (March 2007); and "Al-Qaeda's Media Strategies" in *The National Interest* (Spring 2006).

Lynch began writing his influential Middle East politics blog *Abu Aardvark* under a pseudonym in 2002, and began blogging under his own name in the spring of 2005. Despite (or perhaps because of) the quirky name, *Abu Aardvark* gained a wide following among Middle East policy professionals, journalists, and academics.

Irshad Manji: Director, Moral Courage Project at New York University

Irshad Manji is director of the Moral Courage Project at New York University. It teaches young leaders to challenge intellectual conformity and self-censorship.

This initiative stems directly from Manji's work to promote change among her fellow Muslims. She is author of the *New York Times* best seller, *The Trouble with Islam Today: A Muslim's Call for Reform in Her Faith*. The book has been published in more than thirty countries, including Pakistan, India, Lebanon, and Indonesia. In those countries that have banned her book, Manji reaches readers by posting free translations on her Web site. In all, these have been downloaded over one million times.

Manji is also creator of the Emmy nominated PBS documentary, *Faith Without Fear*, which chronicles her journey to reconcile Islam with human rights. Above all, she is founder of Project Ijtihad, a global campaign to renew Islam's own tradition of debate, dissent, and critical thinking. That is why the Women's International Film & Television Showcase awarded her its 2009 Visionary Prize.

For all of these efforts, Manji has been named a Muslim Leader of Tomorrow by the American Society for Muslim Advancement, a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, a scholar with the European Foundation for Democracy, and the first recipient of Oprah Winfrey's Chutzpah Award for "audacity, nerve, boldness, and conviction."

Pat Mitchell: President and CEO, The Paley Center for Media

Pat Mitchell's career is characterized by her interests in media as a powerful force for change. As a broadcast journalist, an independent producer, and as a television executive, Mitchell's award-winning work took her from the frontlines of conflict to the frontlines of politics and policy: as a network correspondent for NBC and CBS; as a producer and host of ground-breaking programs for broadcast and cable, and an executive responsible for commissioning and supervising more than 500 documentaries a year for the Turner Broadcasting Service and Time Warner.

In 2000, Mitchell became the first woman and first producer to lead America's only public broadcasting service (PBS). During her tenure she led the digital transition and revitalized the content for greater reach and impact during a time of commercial media consolidation and fragmentation of the audience.

Assuming the top position at the Paley Center for Media in 2006, Mitchell has brought new life to The Paley Center for Media's event series with innovative programming that has attracted high profile leaders in entertainment, technology, business, politics, and policy. Mitchell has clearly positioned the Paley Center as both an independent forum for industry professionals and a public space for media lovers to gather for information and entertaining events—from evenings with casts and creative teams of current popular series to premieres of new and innovative work, to industry dialogues focused on the dynamics of a rapidly evolving and converging media landscape.

In addition to many industry awards for her work, Mitchell has been named to the Broadcasting Hall of Fame, and is listed as one of Hollywood's Most Powerful Women. She also serves on several Boards, including the Mayo Clinic, the Sundance Institute, AOL, US/Afghan Women's Council, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

A magna cum laude graduate of the University of Georgia, with a master's degree in English literature, Mitchell has been awarded several honorary doctorate degrees. She has also been awarded honorary doctorate degrees. She and her husband, Scott Seydel, have six children and ten grandchildren and reside in New York City and Atlanta, Georgia.

Dalia Mogahed: Senior Analyst and Executive Director, Gallup Center for Muslim Studies

Dalia Mogahed is a senior analyst and executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, a nonpartisan research center dedicated to providing data-driven analysis on the views of Muslim populations around the world. With John L. Esposito, Ph.D., she is coauthor of the book *Who Speaks for Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. Mogahed was recently appointed

to President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, where she serves on the Inter-religious dialogue and cooperation task force. Mogahed also serves on the boards of Freedom House and Women in International Security (WIIS). Her analysis has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Policy* magazine, the *Harvard International Review*, *Middle East Policy*, and many other academic and popular journals.

Mogahed leads the analysis of Gallup's unprecedented survey representing the opinions of more than one billion Muslims worldwide, including Muslims in the West. She also directs the Muslim-West Facts Project (muslimwestfacts.com), through which Gallup, in collaboration with the Coexist Foundation, is disseminating the findings of the Gallup World Poll to key opinion leaders in the Muslim world and the West.

Mogahed travels the globe engaging diverse groups on what Muslims around the world really think. Her audiences have included the High-Level Group of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the Community of West and Islam Dialogue (C-100) group of the World Economic Forum, the Brookings Institution's US-Islamic World Forum, British parliamentarians, American senators, and religious leaders from every faith. She has discussed Gallup findings with a wide range of opinion leaders, including Madeleine Albright, Deepak Chopra, Stephen R. Covey, Quincy Jones, and Jeffrey Sachs; Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman; evangelical leader Richard Land; bestselling author Karen Armstrong; US Senator Chuck Hagel; Muslim activist and teacher Amr Khaled; and Sheikh Habib Ali al-Jifri, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Her Majesty Queen Rania al Abdullah of Jordan, as well as two of the highest authorities of Sunni Islam, the Grand Muftis of Egypt and Bosnia, their Excellencies Dr. Ali Gomaa and Dr. Mustafa Ceric.

Mogahed earned her master's degree in business administration with an emphasis in strategy from the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh. She received her undergraduate degree in chemical engineering. Upon graduation, Mogahed joined Procter & Gamble as a marketing products researcher.

Lawrence Pintak: Founding Dean, Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University

Lawrence Pintak is founding dean of the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University. He is a veteran of more than thirty years in journalism and the media business on four continents who now writes and lectures on America's relationship with the Muslim world, the role of the media in shaping global perceptions and government policy, the future of journalism in a digital/globalized world, and the responsibilities of reporters covering conflict and social injustice.

Pintak has spent the past four years as director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research at The American University in Cairo where he led the only graduate journalism program in the Arab world, headed a variety of professional journalism training programs, and created *Arab Media & Society* (arabmediasociety.com/), Mogtamana.org; a portal for Egyptian civil society, Intihabat2008.org, a US election resource site for Arab journalists, and the first "virtual newsroom" in Second Life. His columns and op-eds appear in *The New York Times*, *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Daily Star Beirut*, *The Daily News Cairo*, *Arab News*, *Gulf News*, *Tempo (Indonesia)*, *The Jakarta Post*, *Al-Shurooq Egypt*, *the Turkish Daily News*, along with *Columbia Journalism Review online*, *Newsweek*, *WashingtonPost.com* and *CommonDrea.org*.

Pintak covered the Lebanon conflict, the Iran-Iraq War and the birth of modern radical Islamist terrorism as CBS News Middle East correspondent in the 1980s. *The Washington Post* called his book on the US intervention in Beirut “one of the most perceptive accounts of the nightmare in Lebanon,” and *Middle East Journal* said his most recent book, on post-9/11 US-Muslim relations, was “an example of the best of contemporary journalism.” Pintak was based in Indonesia in the 1990s, where he reported on the Asian economic collapse and the overthrow of Indonesian President Suharto for *The San Francisco Chronicle* and ABC News.

Pintak won two Overseas Press Club awards for his Middle East coverage, was twice nominated for Emmys, and has contributed to many of the world’s leading news organizations.

Howard Rosenberg: Producer, CBS News 60 Minutes

An award-winning investigative reporter, Howard L. Rosenberg is currently a Washington-based producer for CBS News’ *60 Minutes* and Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent Lara Logan. Prior to returning to CBS in 2009, Rosenberg spent eleven years as a producer for ABC’s *Nightline*, *PrimeTime* with Diane Sawyer and Charles Gibson, and *20/20*. At *Nightline*, Rosenberg led ABC teams in reporting from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Afghanistan, China and the Hizballah War. He has also produced award-winning reports at ABC for Charles Gibson and Bob Woodruff for both *Nightline* and *World News*. Rosenberg also produced exclusive interviews by ABC legal correspondent Jan Crawford Greenburg with Supreme Court Justices John Paul Stevens, Clarence Thomas, and Chief Justice John Roberts. Rosenberg and Greenburg also co-authored a series of stories revealing top officials of the Bush Administration personally directed harsh interrogation regimes at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Rosenberg’s recent television credits also include writing and producing the hour-long ABC specials, *Rumsfeld’s Rules of War* with the late John F. McWethy, and *9/11: Moment of Crisis*; as well as co-writing and co-producing the hour-long ABC reports, *The Hunt for Osama bin Laden*, *Attack on the USS Cole*, *American Terrorist: In His Own Words*, and for a special edition of *Nightline*, *The Lost Convoy*—the story of the Army’s ill-fated 507th Maintenance Company, ambushed at the outset of the Iraq War. Rosenberg co-produced the Diane Sawyer special, *Private Jessica Lynch: An American Story* and was the producer for Barbara Walters, Sam Donaldson, Cokie Roberts, and others during ABC’s live special coverage of the state funeral of former President Ronald Reagan.

As a writer, Rosenberg’s work has appeared in dozens of national publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Parade*, *Us*, *The Progressive*, *The New Republic* and *Mother Jones*.

Charles Sennott: Executive Editor and Cofounder, GlobalPost

Charles M. Sennott, the executive editor and cofounder of GlobalPost, is an award-winning journalist and author with a distinguished career in international reporting for both print and broadcast news organizations. As executive editor, Sennott oversees a team of seventy correspondents in fifty countries

With nearly twenty-five years as a reporter and on-air analyst, Sennott has been on the front lines of wars and insurgencies in fifteen countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine. For more than fifteen years, Sennott has covered religious movements and the rise of fundamentalism in the Muslim world.

A long-time foreign correspondent for *The Boston Globe*, Sennott served as the *Globe's* Middle East bureau chief based in Jerusalem from 1997 to 2001 and as Europe bureau chief based in London from 2001 to 2005.

Jamie Tarabay: Correspondent, NPR

After reporting from Iraq for five years, including two as NPR's Baghdad bureau chief, Jamie Tarabay has now embarked on a two year project reporting on America's Muslims. The coverage will take in the country's Muslims, of different ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and the issues facing their daily lives as Americans.

In January 2007, Tarabay was part of the NPR News team that won the prestigious Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for coverage of Iraq, the only news organization so recognized.

For the past ten years, Tarabay has been a foreign correspondent covering — and living in — some of the world's highest-profile regions of conflict. In September 2000, she arrived in Jerusalem as a correspondent for the AP just days before the second Intifada broke out. She captured her three years of reporting on Palestinians and Israelis in her first book *A Crazy Occupation: Eyewitness to the Intifada*. Her written work has also appeared in the quarterly journal *Dispatches* and *Marie Claire* magazine.

Tarabay is one of the few female Western journalists to have made a career as a war reporter. In that time she's been arrested, proposed to by militiamen, interviewed everyone from world leaders to armed fighters, been shot at, felt the blast of an IED and the punches of demonstrators as well as police.

Garrick Utley: President, Levin Institute

Garrick Utley is president of The Neil D. Levin Graduate Institute of International Relations and Commerce of the State University of New York. For forty years, Utley worked as a broadcast journalist on NBC, ABC, CNN, as well as Public Radio and Public Television. With a primary focus on international affairs, he has reported from more than seventy-five countries. He is the author of the book: *You Should Have Been Here Yesterday* (Public Affairs, 2000), a narrative of the growth of television news in the United States. He is on the board of The Council on Foreign Relations (1993-2003), Carleton College (1983-2007) and Public Radio International (1996-2008). Currently, Utley is chairman of the American Council on Germany.

Steven Waldman: Senior Advisor to the Chairman, FCC

Steven Waldman is the senior advisor to the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. He is leading a major effort there on the future of the media. He was the co-founder, CEO and editor in chief of Beliefnet.com, the leading multifaith spirituality and inspiration Web site. Before that, he was a newsmagazine editor and journalist for *Newsweek* and *US News & World Report*. He is the author of *Founding Faith: Providence, Politics and the Birth of Religious Freedom in America*.

Acknowledgments

We are extremely grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, for their sponsorship of *Media and the Muslim World: Enriching the American Dialogue*. Special thanks go to Hillary Wiesner, the Director of Carnegie Corporation's Islamic Initiative, whose support far exceeded expectations with her keen contributions on programming, participants, and production.

Thanks also to Christiane Amanpour, of CNN for her insightful discussion with The Paley Center for Media's President and CEO Pat Mitchell, which set the stage for our investigation. Thanks also to CNN's Carolyn Disbrow for her contribution.

Warmest appreciation goes to all the participants in our Dialogue, and especially to Garrick Utley, for his efforts as our insightful and urbane moderator. R.J. Smith deserves accolades for his work as rapporteur and for writing this report.

Many people were generous with us as we planned the conference. Special thanks go to Rushda Majeed of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, Anisa Mehdi, and Professor Diane Winston for their intellectual contributions. And Genieve Abdo, Patrick Butler of the International Center for Journalists, and Dalia Mogahed of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies deserve thanks for contributing books to the participants.

This discussion is especially important to The Paley Center for Media, as it gives us the opportunity to fulfill our core mission to provide a place and opportunity to consider the most important and vexing issues of media and society today, and seek solutions for those issues. Special thanks go to all those from The Paley Center for their hard work on producing the conference particularly to President and CEO Pat Mitchell, Executive Vice President and COO Christy Carpenter, and Vice President and Media Council Executive Director Max Robins. Thanks to Dayna Clark, Ed Esposito, and to Erin Gromen for her work on the entire project from start to finish. Accolades to Doug Warner, Eric Geppert, Liz Jennings, and Anthony Gargiulo and the rest of the staff of the Technical Department for their always professional performance. And thanks to Ellen O'Neill, Deanna Caron, and the rest of the Creative Services staff.

Finally, the greatest appreciation goes to the staff of the Industry Programs Department, for organizing and producing *Media and the Muslim World*. Thanks to our interns Nana Boakye, Vanessa Clifford, and Yael Pomerance. And we extend the warmest appreciation to Rachel Golden, Ben Scheim, and most especially to Marisa Lauren, whose invaluable contribution attests to her many skills, great perspicacity, and boundless commitment.

Peter Herdrich
Director, Industry Programs
The Paley Center for Media